

Assessing Student Engagement with an Updated NSSE: New Possibilities



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Audience Survey

- Are you in NSSE 2013?
- Do you have NSSE results from past years?
- Who has worked with their NSSE results?
- What questions do you have about using NSSE in your assessment & improvement work?



Agenda

- Current Context
- Engagement Findings
- Data for assessment & persistence
- Updated NSSE
- Discussion and Questions



College Attainment Report: The Challenge is Urgent



- ALL colleges and universities **must marshal the resources to make completion a priority**
- **Change campus culture** to boost student success
 - Create student-centered culture
 - **Improve** the academic experience
- Institutions must take steps to increase the chances that students will be successful, and **ensure that students are active, engaged participants**

ACE College Attainment Report, January 23, 2013

The Challenge for Student Affairs:

To create energy in our campus systems to create and sustain processes of regular and systematic assessment of student outcomes for continuous improvement.

- Susan Komives, 2006, *Reflections on Outcomes and Assessment: Applying the CAS Process*



Four Principles For Assessment & Accountability in Student Affairs

1. Make SA role in promotion of student learning plain – *be explicit about learning outcomes you seek to foster*
2. Assess extent to which students are experiencing practices associated with and making gains on specific learning outcomes
3. Motivation for assessment should come from desire to fully understand strengths & shortcomings of student experience, and then to make changes where necessary
4. It's right to commit to evidence-based practice, to be accountable, and to improve

What We Know About Student Success:



- Student engagement in intentionally designed educationally purposeful activities is necessary to achieve desirable learning outcomes.
- Institutions need information about students experiences to deploy resources appropriately and encourage success behaviors.

What is Student Engagement?



Student engagement is the time and energy students devote to educationally purposeful activities – practices shown to be related to desired educational outcomes



What is NSSE?

- NSSE annually gathers valid, reliable information on the extent to which **First Year & Senior** students are exposed to proven educational practices that correspond to desirable learning outcomes.
 - Results provide estimates of how students spend their time and what they gain
 - NSSE items represent empirically confirmed 'good practices'; behaviors associated with student learning and development

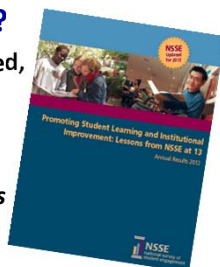
Integrating NSSE and Outcomes Assessment to Inform Student Affairs Practice

- Student engagement is a rich concept to base evidence-driven practice (possible with/without NSSE results)
- Student engagement concept, research, plus campus data provide a stronger basis for documenting and improving learning processes and outcomes



What Have We Learned From NSSE 2000-2012?

- The more students are engaged, the more likely they are to persist and succeed
- Some practices are unusually effective – “High-Impact” *HIPs* - doing research with faculty, service-learning, positively related to deep approaches to learning
- Upward institution-level trends in engagement over time



Refreshing Engagement: NSSE at 13

by Alexander C. McCormick, Robert M. Gonyea and Jillian Kinzie

Summarize 13 years of lessons...

- Wabash National Study findings: positive connections between students' experiences, learning outcomes (critical thinking, problem solving, intercultural effectiveness, etc.) and development
- Engagement had stronger effects on first-year grades and persistence for underprepared and historically underserved students — the very populations most in need of improved outcomes



Key Questions Answered: Do Students Invest Enough Time in their Studies?

- Average FY spends **15** hrs per week
 - Women spent 1 hr. *more* than men
 - First-generation devoted 1 hr. *less* per week
 - Major differences – Engineering 5 hrs. more
- Faculty no longer hold to 2 hrs. for every 1 in class
FSSE results show time *faculty expect* is only *slightly higher* than what students report



Conditions of Educationally Effective Institutions

1. “Living” Mission & “Lived” Educational Philosophy
2. Unshakeable Focus on Student Learning
3. Environments Adapted for Educational Enrichment
4. Clearly Marked Pathways to Student Success
5. Improvement-Oriented Ethos
6. Shared Responsibility for Educational Quality

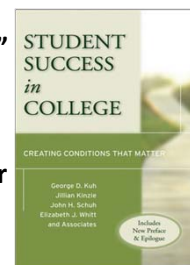
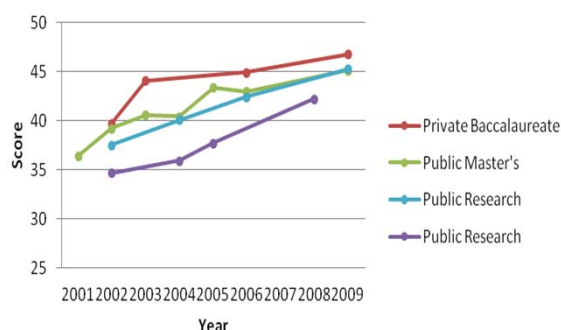


Figure 1. Trends in First-Year Active & Collaborative Learning at Four Institutions



Institutional Improvement Over Time!

Positive trends outnumber negative ones, by margin of 7:1



Most Importantly, NSSE is a Tool for Campus Assessment & Improvement Efforts

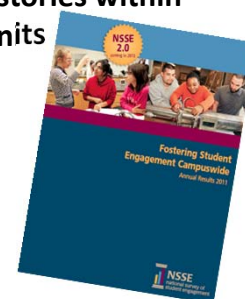
- Student engagement data provide a strong basis for documenting and improving learning processes and outcomes on campus!
- NSSE results help campuses focus on what matters for educational quality



Annual Results 2011: Fostering Engagement Campuswide

Featured Assessment stories within campus programs & units

- Service-Learning
- Residence Life
- Career Services
- Greek Life
- Transfer Students

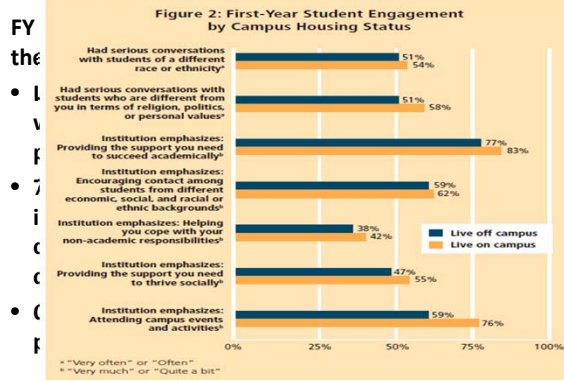


Residence Life Example

FY students *who live on-campus* differed from their peers

- Living on-campus = more serious conversations with students different in terms of religion, politics, and personal values
- 76% of students living on campus said institution substantially emphasized attending campus events & activities, vs. 59% of off-campus
- On-campus residents believed their institution provided more support to thrive socially

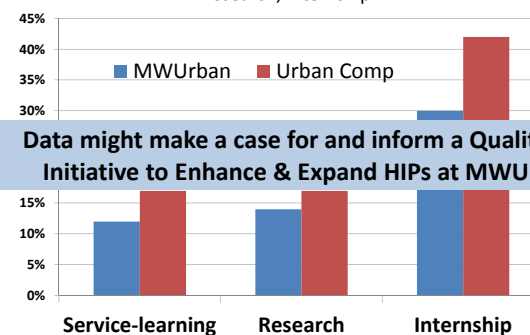
Residence Life Example



Example of Mission Effectiveness: Are students & faculty experiencing our service-learning mission?

- NSSE results show that nearly 50% of FY and 75% of Seniors do service-learning or community service – significantly more than comparable peer institutions
- Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE) results show **65%** faculty teaching FY think "service-learning" is "important" and **42%** do this in their courses.
- *Data provide evidence of service-learning mission!*

Percent Midwest U (MWU) Seniors "Done" High Impact Practices: Service-Learning, Undergraduate Research, Internship



NSSE Use in Persistence

- Concern about retention rates & education quality
- Task force retreat to review data
- Low NSSE results in Supportive Campus Environment suggested area for improvement
 - Developed unified academic support center for tutoring & supplemental instruction
 - Immediate response to students at academic risk
- Tracking NSSE results post-implementation



NSSE Updated in 2013



Why Update Now? Purpose

- We know more about what matters to student success, institutional improvement efforts, and properties of the NSSE survey itself
- NSSE must stay relevant to current issues
- Starting in 2005, we kept the survey largely unchanged with the aim of rolling out major updates at longer-term intervals



Why Update Now? Goals

- Maintain core purpose of assessing student engagement in effective educational practices to inform improvement
- Stay current with trends in higher education
- Improve clarity, consistency, and applicability of survey
- Improve properties of existing measures
- Incorporate new measures relevant to effective teaching and learning



NSSE national survey of student engagement
THE COLLEGE STUDENT REPORT

During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?

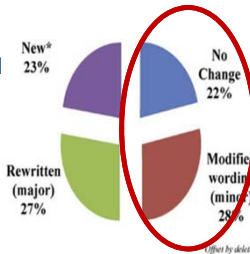
	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Never
Asked questions or contributed to course discussions in other ways	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Come to class without completing readings or assignments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attended an art exhibit, play or other arts performance (dance, music, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Asked another student to help you understand course material	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Explained course material to one or more students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Prepared for exams by discussing or working through course material with other students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Worked with other students on course projects or assignments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gave a course presentation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?

	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Never
Combined ideas from different courses when completing assignments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Connected your learning to societal problems or issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Included diverse perspectives (political, religious, racial/ethnic, gender, etc.) in course discussions or assignments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How did the NSSE items change?

- About a quarter of NSSE items are new, about the same proportion remained unchanged.
- Of the half that changed, an equal number were modified in major or minor ways.
- Deleted items maintained the overall length.




How did the NSSE items change?

2012 Survey	2013 Survey	Comparison
How often... Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in	How often... Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in	=
How often... Used e-mail to communicate with an instructor		Del
	How often... Connected your learning to societal problems or issues	New
How often... Talked about career plans with faculty member or advisor	How often... Talked about career plans with a faculty member	Min
How often... Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)	How often... Explained course material to one or more students	Maj

New Content in 2013

- Learning Strategies
 - How often have you...
 - Identified key information from reading assignments
 - Reviewed your notes after class
 - Summarized what you learned in class or from course materials



How can you track item changes?

- Item by Item Comparisons of NSSE 2012 and NSSE 2013:
- [nsse.iub.edu/pdf/NSSE 2012-2013 Item Comparisons.pdf](http://nsse.iub.edu/pdf/NSSE%202012-2013%20Item%20Comparisons.pdf)

NSSE national survey of student engagement		
Item by Item Comparisons of NSSE 2012 and NSSE 2013 (View NSSE 2013 Online at nsse.iub.edu/links/surveys)		
2012 Survey Instrument	2013 Survey Instrument	Comparison ^a
Item #	Item #	
1a	1a	Identical
1b	1b	Identical
1c	1c	Identical
1d	1d	Identical
1e	1e	Identical
1f	1f	Identical
1g	1g	Identical
1h	1h	Identical
1i	1i	Identical
1j	1j	Identical
1k	1k	Identical
1l	1l	Identical
1m	1m	Identical
1n	1n	Identical
1o	1o	Identical
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1x	1x	Identical
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The Former NSSE Benchmarks are being Retired!



- Level of Academic Challenge
 - Time, effort, and challenge
 - Challenging assignments
- Active and Engaged Learning
 - Active involvement
 - Active involvement with others
- Student-Faculty Interactions
 - Interacting with faculty
 - Interacting with faculty in and out of the classroom
- Enriching Educational Experiences
 - Complementing the classroom
 - That augments the classroom
- Supportive Environment
 - Perceptions of academic and personal success

Engagement Indicators and High-Impact Practices

Reporting 10 measures *plus* individual high-impact practices provides more *specificity* and more *actionability*

NSSE 2013 Engagement Indicators	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher-Order Learning Reflective & Integrative Learning Learning Strategies Quantitative Reasoning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborative Learning Discussions with Diverse Others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student-Faculty Interaction Teaching Practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of Interactions Supportive Environment
High-Impact Practices	
Learning Community, Capstone, Study Abroad, Service-Learning, Research w/Fac., Internship	

Getting Acquainted with Updated NSSE

NSSE Engagement Indicators

Campus Environment

Quality of Interactions
Indicate the quality of your interactions with the following people at your institution:


- Students
- Academic Advisors
- Faculty
- Student services staff (career services, student activities, housing, etc.)
- Other administrative staff and offices (registrar, financial aid, etc.)

Supportive Environment
How much does your institution emphasize the following:

- Providing support to help students succeed academically
- Using learning support services (tutoring services, writing center, etc.)
- Encouraging contact among students from different backgrounds (social, racial/ethnic, religious, etc.)
- Providing opportunities to be involved socially
- Providing support for your overall well-being (recreation, health care, counseling, etc.)
- Helping you manage your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)
- Attending campus activities and events (performing arts, athletic events, etc.)
- Attending events that address important social, economic, or political issues

Getting Acquainted with Updated NSSE

- Review Engagement Indicators (EIs)
- Which measure most relates to your unit?
- Which EIs suggest an opportunity for partnership on campus?



What Use Do you see for the "Discussions with Diverse Others" Measure?

Discussions with Diverse Others
During the current school year, how often have you had discussions with people from the following groups:

- People from a race or ethnicity other than your own
- People from an economic background other than your own
- People with religious beliefs other than your own
- People with political views other than your own

What Use Do you see for the Discussions with Diverse Others Items?

- Assess institutional commitment to diverse learning experiences
- Assess multicultural affairs, diversity component in curriculum,
- Where do diverse discussion levels vary? by student characteristics? Majors? Housing status...

Discussions with Diverse Others

During the current school year, how often have you had discussions with people from the following groups:

- People from a race or ethnicity other than your own
- People from an economic background other than your own
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Relationship Between Quality of Interactions Measure and Persistence

Quality of Interactions

Indicate the quality of your interactions with the following people at your institution:

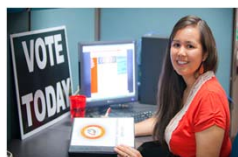
- Students
- Academic Advisors
- Faculty
- Student services staff (career services, student activities, housing, etc.)
- Other administrative staff and offices (registrar, financial aid, etc.)

For further analysis....Explore relationship between Quality of Interaction and students' rating of their "entire educational experience" & "start over" items

Additional New Content

• Topical modules:

- Academic advising
- Civic engagement
- Transferable skills
- Writing
- Technology
- Experiences with diversity



• Additional modules will be developed over time — send us your great ideas!

Opportunities for Partnership

Who might be interested?
teaching practices?

Center for T&L, faculty development committee, academic departments

learning strategies ?

Academic support office, orientation, FYE staff

- Expanded content on diverse interactions, leadership, likely to be of interest to student affairs, accreditation committees, academic departments
- How might you generate interest in new results? Or, solicit interest of relevant staff and units?



What will remain the same?

- Meaningful, actionable data about educational quality
- Updated resources (Accreditation Toolkits, Facilitators Guide)
- Updated FSSE & BCSSE
- Customizable comparison groups
- What do you most want to see retained?
- What NSSE data, report, or feature is most important to you and your campus?



How might you prepare???

- Re-familiarize yourself with the NSSE data you already have
 - What was most valued (items, benchmark scores, multi-year data etc.) and how will this be affected?
- Review the updated NSSE survey http://nsse.iub.edu/html/survey_instruments.cfm and Topical Modules <http://nsse.iub.edu/html/modules.cfm>



How might you prepare???

- Find new partners! NSSE has many new measures and features – results cross divisions, units, are campuswide
 - Meet with IR
 - Form partnerships with faculty/academic units, to explore common areas of interest
 - Link data to processes – accreditation, annual reports...



What other questions do you have?



Ideas, feedback, and questions:

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